

Samuel H. Powers

Background Information

Sam Powers is Director of the Office of Economic Development for the City of Asheville, North Carolina. Asheville regularly appears nationally as one of the top cities in the US in the arts and entertainment, retirement, manufacturing, business climate, sustainability efforts, outdoor recreation opportunities, and quality of life. Asheville's vibrant downtown, with a mix of eclectic locally-owned shops, restaurants, and live entertainment scene, is increasingly becoming a national destination.

The Office of Economic Development includes the city's real estate management, economic/product development planning, minority business program and the Asheville Civic Center. The Office of Economic Development also provides office space and in-kind support for the regional office of US Small Business Administration and the non-profit Asheville Downtown Association.

Mr. Powers has an extensive background of public service to communities in Appalachia. Mr. Powers has been assisting localities in meeting development challenges for over 28 years. Prior to joining the City of Asheville, he served as Vice President of Marketing for AdvantageWest NC, a regional partnership serving 23 counties in western North Carolina, and as Economic Developer for the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. He also held economic development and city/county management positions in Southwestern Virginia. His work as a Circuit-Riding Town Manager was featured on the *CBS Morning News with Charles Kuralt*.

Mr. Powers is a graduate of Appalachian State University and has studied on the graduate level at Appalachian and Virginia Tech. He is a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) through the International Economic Development Council, and is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma. He is active in numerous professional, civic, and community organizations in Asheville and western North Carolina.